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Organic & Effectual

Sometimes, less really is more—especially when it comes to clean lines, curated materials, and thoughtfully chosen sustainable features



INTERIOR DESIGNER KIMBERLY NIOSI OF NIOSI INTERIOR DESIGN EMPLOYED A USER-CENTERED, "EMPATHIC" APPROACH IN THIS EDINA KITCHEN, DEFINED BY ITS FLOOR-TO-CEILING BLEACHED WOOD CABINETRY, ECO-FRIENDLY ELEMENTS, WARM COLOR PALETTE, AND MORE.



“**W**e create our spaces—after that, they create us.” It’s a philosophy that Kimberly Niosi, Allied ASID interior designer at Niosi Interior Design lives by, and it has proven to be true in this kitchen she designed with her clients’ needs and tastes in mind. When she approaches a project, like this Edina new build, Niosi researches demographics, meticulously tests out color palettes, and asks clients how certain things make them feel. It’s a methodology called “empathic design.”

“Empathic design is really about how we see the world through other people’s eyes and to garner a greater knowledge of who they are,” she says.

In this residence, completed with Adriatic Construction, Niosi employed empathic touches through warm colorways, curved visuals, softly shaped light fixtures, and an infusion of biophilic design. These characteristics all come together in the kitchen, where Niosi says she imagined how the homeowners would live, work, and entertain.

With finishes and details that feel as if the outdoors has been brought in, one of the eye-catching features is something that’s seen throughout the home: bleached wood cabinetry. “I first saw this bleaching process on a trip to New York, and I really couldn’t get it out of my mind,” Niosi says. “I was looking to keep the color indistinguishable. This meant that the artisan had to apply varying coats with varying dry times.”

While the wood looks lived-in and even bygone, it serves as a juxtaposition against the current-day features. Fortunately, the new homeowners also had a keen interest in sustainability and ergonomics, aspects that Niosi had accounted for.

“While studying the flow and floor plan, I focused on the human characteristics and movement, applying a user-centered approach to the design,” Niosi says. “I made the decision to use less upper cabinetry to design a beautiful and open, yet minimalistic kitchen so that I could drive consumption patterns and encourage the utilization of innovative products. For instance, there’s storage for linen napkins as opposed to paper napkins and cellulose-absorbent sheets instead of paper towels. There’s even space for composting.”

In a kitchen that Niosi describes as organic, effectual, and luxe, she puts it best when she shares her singular design goal: “I just want to leave people with beauty.” And that’s something she has certainly done in this stunning kitchen. ✕